



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director & Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

July 5, 2023

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #23-110
FY23 Operating Budget of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Supply Chain
Assistance Funds (\$2,513,686)

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that *Supplemental Appropriation #23-110 FY23 Operating Budget Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Supply Chain Assistance (SAC) Funds* have the ability to advance equitable outcomes for low-income children enrolled in the MCPS system – specifically those who identify as Black or Latinx. As with previous supplemental requests regarding SAC funds, resources will be used to provide **all** MCPS students with access to domestic food products that are unprocessed or minimally processed. As the funds are made available primarily to participants in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, low-income students (who are disproportionately students of color, students living in mixed-status families, and/or students whose primary language is not English) are more likely to benefit from this funding opportunity as they are the primary recipients of these programs (the Free and Reduced-priced Meals or FARMS Program) in MCPS.

As noted in previous Racial Equity Impact Assessments (REIAs) addressing food insecurity in Montgomery County, funding from this supplemental appropriation will not serve to address the underlying structures creating food insecurity within the County. In turn, these funds will support efforts that aim to serve MCPS students with the greatest demonstrated levels of need—ensuring their chances of improved well-being and academic success by making sure no student goes hungry while learning.

- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #23-110 FY23 Operating Budget MCPS SAC Fund is to assist local educational agencies participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program with resources needed to address continuing supply chain shortages. The funds (in the amount of \$2,513,686) are limited to the purchase of unprocessed or minimally processed domestic food products. The [REIA for Supplemental Appropriation #23-25 FY23 Operating Budget Montgomery County Public Schools \(MCPS\) Supply Chain Assistance \(SAC\) Fund](#), notes that the burden of food insecurity has most acutely affected low-income communities, particularly those with higher concentrations of immigrants, as they are most often excluded from governmental supports such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and housing assistance due to their undocumented status. These findings mirror the level of need for food support amongst MCPS students as the primary recipients of the FARMS program in the County identify as Latinx or Black.

Much like national statistics, the increased need for food support among low-income county residents – especially those with children – was heightened by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent disruptions in the supply chain as well as inflation. ORESJ has previously documented the increased need for food support for Montgomery County residents and MCPS students in the following REIAs:

1. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation Food Security Bridge Funding Proposal
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/FoodSecurity.pdf>
2. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-27 Food Security Bridge Funding Proposal updated
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-27.pdf>
3. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-79 Bridge Funding for the Food Security Task Force
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-79.pdf>
4. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #23-27 FY23 Montgomery County Government, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Food Staples Program
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-27.pdf>
5. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #23-61 – Amendment to the FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program for Resurfacing Parking Lots: MCG
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-61.pdf>

The REIAs highlighted above provide readers with context regarding the state of food insecurity in Montgomery County—whose most affected and why. While the funding put forth by this supplemental request will undoubtedly benefit all children enrolled in MCPS, it will be most beneficial to children in families with limited food security. Additionally, while the funding made available through this supplemental request does not address overall systemic factors that lead to food insecure households, serving children with the greatest demonstrated levels of need for food support (Black, Latinx, and English learners) will help to mitigate disparate outcomes

facing MCPS students. Additionally, as the country has returned to pre-pandemic benefit levels for SNAP along with the ending of pandemic-era rental assistance payments, continuous Medicaid eligibility, and the expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) – programs with a demonstrated ability to lend themselves to proven stability outcomes for families often struggling to make ends meet – the need for resources such as SAC Funds have become even more imperative.

cc: Monifa McKnight, Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools
Ken Hartman, Director, Office of Strategic Partnership, Office of the County Executive